

ACT 275

H.B. NO. 598

A Bill for an Act Relating to Education.

*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:*

SECTION 1. Today's students are living in an increasingly technology-driven world. Statistics indicate that ninety per cent of children and adolescents from ages five to seventeen use computers. About fifty-nine per cent of them use the Internet.

To continue captivating the minds of our youth, public education must adapt and function within the context of their changing world by applying technology.

Access to knowledge and information has expanded exponentially due to the Internet. Such powerful technology should be taken advantage of to enhance the learning experiences of students.

Online learning opens up many opportunities for students, and more and more educators and policymakers across the nation are recognizing the benefits of education unconstrained by time and place. As of September 2006, thirty-eight states either had policies in place for online education, offered a state-led online learning program, or both.

The purpose of this Act is to create an online learning task force to develop a systematic plan to expand opportunities for online learning and project a phasing-in

plan for costs and desirable outcomes to enhance the learning experiences of students across the state.

SECTION 2. (a) There is established an online learning task force to be attached to the department of education for administrative purposes. The task force shall develop a systematic plan to expand opportunities for online learning to enhance the learning experiences of students across the state.

The plan shall:

- (1) Address the following objectives:
    - (A) Providing choices for learners in how they learn and how they present evidence of what they have learned;
    - (B) Providing individuals access to learning opportunities on a twenty-four-hour-per-day, seven-days-per-week basis; and
    - (C) Enriching and enhancing twenty-first century skills for all learners;
  - (2) Include methods for achieving the following desired outcomes:
    - (A) Increasing on-time or earlier graduation rates;
    - (B) Increasing student achievement as measured by the Hawaii state assessment;
    - (C) Decreasing student retention;
    - (D) Decreasing student misconduct referrals; and
    - (E) Increasing the number of highly qualified teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals;
  - (3) Include cost projections and a plan for phasing-in costs; and
  - (4) Include proposals for regulatory policies appropriate to online learning programs.
- (b) The members of the online learning task force shall include but not be limited to:
- (1) The assistant superintendent of the department of education office of curriculum, instruction, and student support or the assistant superintendent's designee;
  - (2) The assistant superintendent of the department of education office of information and technology services or the assistant superintendent's designee;
  - (3) The vice chancellor for students of the University of Hawaii at Manoa;
  - (4) A representative from the Hawaii Educational Networking Consortium; and
  - (5) A representative from the Myron B. Thompson Academy.
- (c) Members of the online learning task force shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for expenses, including travel expenses, necessary for the performance of their duties.
- (d) The online learning task force shall be exempt from chapter 92, Hawaii Revised Statutes; provided that the task force shall make a good faith effort to make its proceedings and work products accessible and available to the general public in a manner consistent with the intent of chapter 92, Hawaii Revised Statutes.
- (e) The online learning task force shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2008.
- (f) The online learning task force shall terminate on June 30, 2008.

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$50,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008 to support the operations of the online learning task force.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of education for the purposes of this Act.

**SECTION 4.** This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2007.

(Became law on July 10, 2007, without the Governor's signature, pursuant to Art. III, §16, State Constitution.)